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ABSTRACT

In the area of child rearing, U.S. society has largely allowed "expert" ideas and theories to dominate public discussion and literature on child development, at the expense of the attitudes and experiences of those women actually involved with child rearing. This book argues the need for a feminist discussion of childrearing because of the importance of this area in the lives of women. Resulting from a 10-year project focusing on mothers' understanding of childrearing, the book brings forth the voices of the mothers themselves, pointing out that the topic of women's lives with their children has received little research attention. The personal stories and viewpoints of individual women regarding childrearing experiences are highlighted. The chapters of the book are: (1) "Childrearing, Psychology, and Sociology," examining prevailing discourses within psychology and sociology, including a discussion of psychological approaches to "child development"; (2) "A Feminist Study of Childrearing," considering feminist debates in motherhood and explaining the feminist position adopted within this book; (3) "Individuals, Families, and Children"; (4) "Friends and Relations," analyzing how and when social boundaries are constructed regarding relationships with friends and relations; (5) "Fitting Children into Adult Frameworks"; (6) "Fitting In Around Children"; (7) "Conceptions of Children"; (8) "Childrearing Philosophies in Action"; and (9) "Sociology and Childrearing Reconsidered." Contains 319 references. (BGC)

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